

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 IO-13 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 488

INFO US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1142

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 6639

AID FOR FDRC

E. FROM MULTAN WE FLEW ALONG TO WEST BANK OF CHENAB TO RANGPUR: TOWN UNDER WATER AND PEOPLE CAMPING ON HIGH GROUND. LEAVING RANGPUR WE FLEW ALONG WEST SIDE OF RAVI TO LAHORE. IT WAS THE SAME EVERYWHERE: WATER, PEOPLE STRANDED, HOUSES DESTROYED, HOUSES DESTROYED, CROPS UNDER WATER.

4. SADLY, PEOPLE IN SIALKOT/SHAKARGARH AREA (OCCUPIED BY INDIA IN 1971 WAR) HAVE BEEN HIT WITH FLOOD DAMAGE ONLY FEW MONTHS AFTER RETURNING TO THEIR LANDS AND REBUILDING THEIR HOMES. IT WILL HAVE TO BE DONE ALL OVER AGAIN IN SOME PLACES. MINFIN EXPLAINED THAT HOUSES WE SAW STANDING TODAY WILL COLLAPSE IN FEW DAYS BECAUSE THESE KUTCHA HOUSES CANNOT STAND THE STRAIN OF RAIN ON TOP AND FLOOD WATERS AROUND BASE - SO HOME DAMAGE WILL INCREASE OVER PRESENT ESTIMATES.

5. THROUGHOUT TRIP I SAW PLACES IN FIELDS WHERE HARVESTED WHEAT HAD BEEN PILED: THIS USUAL PRACTICE. THESE PILES WERE WASHED AWAY. I INSPECTED REMAINS OF SOME WHEAT PILED AT JHANG WHICH WAS THOROUGH-
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LY SOAKED AND UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION. I HAVE NO WAY OF CORROBORATING GOP ESTIMATE OF ONE MILLION TONS STORED FOODGRAIN DESTROYED BUT OBVIOUSLY LOSSES ARE CONSIDERABLE. ALSO WHEAT STRAW TRADITIONALLY PILED IN FIELD FOR CATTLE FEED HAS BEEN WASHED AWAY.

6. PAK ARMY USING RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO RESCUE AS MANY AS POSSIBLE. USING FEW SMALL HELICOPTERS FOR RESCUE AND DROPPING FOOD PACKETS TO STRANDED HAMLETS AND VILLAGES. LARGER AIR FORCE C-130 TYPE CRAFT DROPPING FOOD IN SIALKOT/BAJWAT AREAS ACCORDING MINFIN. VERY FEW BOATS AVAILABLE FOR USE. MINFIN STATED THIS WORST FLOOD IN 15 YEARS AND PEOPLE JUST NEVER DREAMED BOATS WOULD BE NEEDED IN INLAND PAKISTAN. SIALKOT, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH TRADITIONALLY HAS 12 INCHES RAINFALL HAS HAD 44 INCHES IN TWO MONTHS.

7. IMMEDIATE PROBLEM. I BELIEVE RESCUE EQUIPMENT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE. FORECAST IS FOR MORE RAIN: WE DETOURED THREE TIMES ON TOUR TODAY BECAUSE OF RAIN. FLOOD WATERS WIL RECEDE SLOWLY IN PUNJAB ACCORDING TO PUNJAB SECRETARY IRRIGATION AND POWER. MINFIN, HIMSELF AN ENGINEER, STATED SAME. HE SAID DURING LAST 15 YEARS THE VAST NUMBER OF IRRIGATION STRUCTURES (CANALS AND BUNDS) WHICH HAVE BEEN BUILT BETWEEN THE RIVERS AREACTING AS DAMS: WATER CAN T RUN OFF EASILY. THUS, IF PEOPLE ARE TO BE SAVED AND FED, IF CATTLE ARE TO SURVIVE, SOME MEANS OF GETTING HELP TO THEM IN NECESSARY. IN ADDITION, THE FLOOD WATERS ARE MOVING TOWARD SIND PROVINCE AND THE SAME PROBLEMS WILL PROBABLY EXIST THERE.

8. COORDINATION

A. DISCUSSED WITH MINFIN CONCERN ABOUT COORDINATION OF RELIEF ACTIVITY. HE SAID CABINET DIVISION WOULD HANDLE THESE MATTERS FOR CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. LATER DISCUSSED WITH ACTING RESREP UNDP AND UNDP LIAISON OFFICER GOSS WHO HAS BEEN WORKING ON REHAB PHASE OF DP PROBLEM. GOSS LOCATED IN CABINET DIVISION AND I BELIEVE IN GOOD POSITION AS UNDP OFFICIAL TO COORDINATE DONOR RESPONSE FLOOD DISASTER WITH GOP.

2. WE WILL FORWARD PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS SEPTTEL LATER TODAY.
SOBER

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